

## Message Text

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17

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 OMB-01 IO-10 SAM-01 SAJ-01

NIC-01 AID-05 ACDA-05 SAB-01 CCO-00 /073 W

----- 099007

O R 181001Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMEDIATE 5749

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 1615

JERUSALEM FOR SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IS, US

SUBJ: LIKUD CAMPAIGN AGAINST WITHDRAWALS GETS UNDERWAY

REF: TEL AVIV 1400

SUMMARY: LIKUD OPPOSITION HAS LAUNCHED ITS CAMPAIGN AGAINST ISRAELI WITHDRAWALS IN SINAI IN ABSENCE OF PEACE AGREEMENT, CALLING ON RABIN NOT TO BACK DOWN FROM HIS KNESSET STATEMENT REQUIRING PUBLIC GOE NON-BELLIGERENCY DECLARATION AS POLITICAL QUID-PRO-QUO FOR RETURN OF PASSES AND OIL FIELDS. LIKUD ALSO HAS HIGHLIGHTED ITS OPPOSITION TO ANY EVENTUAL WITHDRAWAL FROM WEST BANK (JUDEA AND SAMARIA), BY PRESENTING PETITION TO THIS EFFECT WITH ALMOST 620,000 SIGNATURES TO KNESSET SPEAKER. END SUMMARY.

1. OPPOSITION LIKUD'S CAMPAIGN TO TRY TO BLOCK GOI AGREE-

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MENT TO WITHDRAWALS IN SINAI HAS CONCENTRATED SO FAR ON

EFFORTS TO RALLY PUBLIC OPINION AND ONLY IN LATER STAGE  
WILL MOVE INTO KNESSET FORUM. MAIN EVENT SO FAR HAS BEEN  
MASS RALLY IN TEL AVIV'S CITY HALL PLAZA EVENING OF MARCH  
15, (ATTENDED BY EMBOFF) WHOSE THEME WAS DRAMATIZED BY  
BANNER IN BACK OF SPEAKER'S PLATFORM STATING, "WITHDRAWALS  
WITHOUT PEACE ENDANGERS ISRAEL'S SECURITY AND DESTROY CHANCE  
OF PEACE." PRESS REPORTS ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE AT  
ABOUT 8000 PEOPLE; OUR OWN ESTIMATE IS CONSIDERABLY LOWER,  
BETWEEN 3-4000, MOSTLY VETERANS FROM HERUT'S UNDERGROUND  
RESISTANCE MOVEMENT OF PRE-INDEPENDENCE DAYS AND RELIGIOUS  
YOUTH GROUPS.

2. HERUT LEADER MENAHEM BEGIN IN KEYNOTE ADDRESS RECALLED  
PRIME MINISTER'S FEBRUARY 12, KNESSET STATEMENT THAT ISRAEL  
WOULD NOT WITHDRAW FROM PASSES AND OIL FIELDS IN ABSENCE  
OF EGYPTIAN NON-BELLIGERENCY DECLARATION, AND DEMANDED THAT  
HE NOT RETRACT FROM THIS POSITION. BEGIN CHARGED THAT  
RECENT STATEMENTS BY SADAT AND ASAD HAD SHOWN CONCLUSIVELY  
THAT EGYPT WOULD NOT MAKE SUCH A NON-BELLIGERENCY DECLARATION,  
AND ASKED RABIN WHY HE HAD NOT ALREADY INFORMED  
SECRETARY THAT IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES ISRAEL CATEGORICALLY  
WOULD NOT WITHDRAW FROM ITS STRATEGIC POSITIONS IN SIANI.  
BEGIN THEN LAUNCHED INTO RECITING CATALOGUE OF WELL  
KNOWN SLOGANS INCLUDING: NO WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT TRUE PEACE,  
NEED FOR DIRECT NEGOTIATIONS LEADING TO PUBLICLY SIGNED  
BILATERAL PEACE AGREEMENTS, AND CALL FOR JEWISH SETTLEMENTS THROUGH-  
OUT LAND OF ISRAEL.

3. DECISION TO HOLD RALLY APPARENTLY WAS MARKED BY SOME  
CONTROVERSY WITHIN LIKUD'S LEADERSHIP RANKS. WE HAVE  
LEARNED FROM RELIABLE SOURCE THAT LIBERAL PARTY LEADER  
ELIMELECH RIMALT INTENTIONALLY ABSENTED HIMSELF FROM  
RALLY BECAUSE HE OPPOSED ITS CONVOCATION. LIBERAL PARTY  
SECRETARY GENERAL TOLD US LAST WEEK THAT RALLY WAS SEEN OF  
HERUT AND LAND OF ISRAEL MOVEMENT FORCES REPRESENTING MOST  
VOCIFEROUSLY HARDLINE ELEMENTS, AND THAT  
LIBERALS FELT DISTINCTLY UNCOMFORTABLE WITH SUCH EFFORT  
TO WHIP UP PUBLIC OPINION.

4. EARLIER IN WEEK, ON MARCH 10, LIKUD LEADERS PRESENTED  
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TO KNESSET SPEAKER THEIR PETITION CARRYING 619,580 SIGNA-  
TURES CALLING ON GOI NOT TO RETURN WEST BANK TO "FOREIGN" RULE.  
WHILE DENYING THAT TIMING OF PRESENTATION WAS IN ANY  
WAY CONNECTED WITH SECRETARY'S CURRENT NEGOTIATING EFFORTS,  
BEGIN SAID THAT "IT WOULD BE GOOD IF DR KISSINGER COULD  
READ THIS FACT IN THOSE NEWSPAPERS WHICH REACH HIM."  
LIKUD LEADERS AGAIN HIGHLIGHTED FACT THAT SIGNATURES ON  
PETITION CONSTITUTED 44 PER CENT OF JEWISH ELECTORATE

VOTING IN LAST ELECTION, ADDING THAT "NO POLITICAL FACTOR"  
COULD POSSIBLY IGNORE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS FIGURE.

5. COMMENT: LIKUD CAMPAIGN SO FAR SEEMS DISTINCTLY  
LACKLUSTRE. LIKUD OPPOSITION CASE  
ALSO SUFFERS, IN OUR JUDGMENT, FROM FAILURE TO OFFER  
ISRAEL PUBLIC ANY CLEARCUT ALTERNATIVE TO NEGOTIATING  
EFFORT BEING PURSUED BY GOI OTHER THAN DIGGING IN  
ITS HEELS AGAINST WITHDRAWALS. LEADERSHIP CAREFULLY  
SHIES AWAY FROM ADDRESSING IN PUBLIC IMPLICATIONS FOR  
ISRAELI-US RELATIONS OF ADOPTING LIKUD'S MORE INTRANSIGENT  
POLICY. NONETHELESS, LIKUD'S POSITION DOES REFLECT  
VIEW OF SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS OF ISRAELI PUBLIC. WE CAN  
EXPECT MORE POLITICAL FIREWORKS IN WEEKS AHEAD, WITH  
LIKUD CARRYING ITS CASE TO KNESSET PODIUM IF EGYPTIAN-ISRALI  
AGREEMENT IS REACHED.

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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